

Building Homes, Growing Communities.



Argyle Community Housing Limited

# 2011-12

## Annual Report

# Jamie's Story



Jamie (centre) with two members of our Riverina Area team, Michele Saffery (left) and Maryanne Hawthorne (right).

'Hi, I'm Jamie. . . . I'm a 53 year old man who is living in an Argyle property in Wagga. I moved into Argyle on the 19th December 2011. I live in a leasehold property and I'm supported by both Argyle and the local men's service, Edil Quin.'

'My story is that I lost my mum when I was 18 months old, the year was 1960. Both my parents were alcoholics. Mum died of a punctured lung. My Dad died of tuberculosis when I was 6 years old. My other extended family didn't want me so I ended up in an orphanage in Hobart. It was a very sad and violent place to grow up in and I stayed there until I was 15.

The nuns who ran the place saw me as out of control and so at 15 I was sent to a Boys Home to deal with my so called behaviour problems. I spent 12 months there and was kicked out when I reached the age of 16.

I liked the boys home. I didn't get beaten like I had at the orphanage and I was treated well. It was just that crime was normal. So when I left the boys home, it was natural for me to engage in crime as it was all that I knew. I wasn't a bad kid. Just made bad by the system. My ambition was to be a gangster and that's what I became. I was just bad at it.

So my life for 30 years involved drugs, crime, jail, psych care and other institutions. I was angry at State Welfare, my family and society generally. I was outcast so why would I want to participate differently. The longest stint in jail was 10 years for drug related and armed robbery offenses but all up I was there for 3 lengthy terms. I have been out of jail now for more than 5 years.

At the end of the last time I was in jail I started to see that society was not to blame for the devastation of my life. I didn't want to do it any more. I didn't want to hurt anyone anymore and when I looked back that was all it had been about. Hurting them and hurting me.

The first step in changing was admitting that I was the problem. I stopped using drugs and I went to supported counselling. I also went into Edil Quin the men's shelter here in Wagga. I found a new freedom with all the beautiful people who worked there. They gave me hope. I stayed with that service up until I moved into Argyle.

I feel blessed by Argyle because they gave me a chance. I had never paid rent or had my own accommodation before so it was good that they trusted me. I have had times that have been hard but mostly I have felt free and happy in my own place. I've done it up nicely and it is my home.

I'm pretty good at paying rent and I work well with the tenancy person from Argyle. We get on good. There needs to be more places like Argyle in other country towns because there is nothing around like this. I think people who work in places like this should show respect for people like me because in my case it has been easy to give it back. I've been treated with respect and given the chance and that has saved my life. I'm going to live in Argyle for the rest of my life because I've got what I always wanted and I've never had that before.'

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## Our Vision

By providing housing as the foundation, assist our clients and their communities to achieve a better future

## Our Values

### Diversity

We respect the diversity of our clients

### Partnerships

We value partnerships

### Collaboration

We collaborate with members of our community to achieve positive outcomes

### Opportunity

We create opportunities for a better 'tomorrow' for our clients and communities

### Support

We value a constructive and supportive work environment

Acknowledgement: In the spirit of reconciliation we acknowledge Aboriginal people who are the traditional owners of the land. We pay respect to the Elders both past and present across the whole geographical area in which Argyle Community Housing operates.

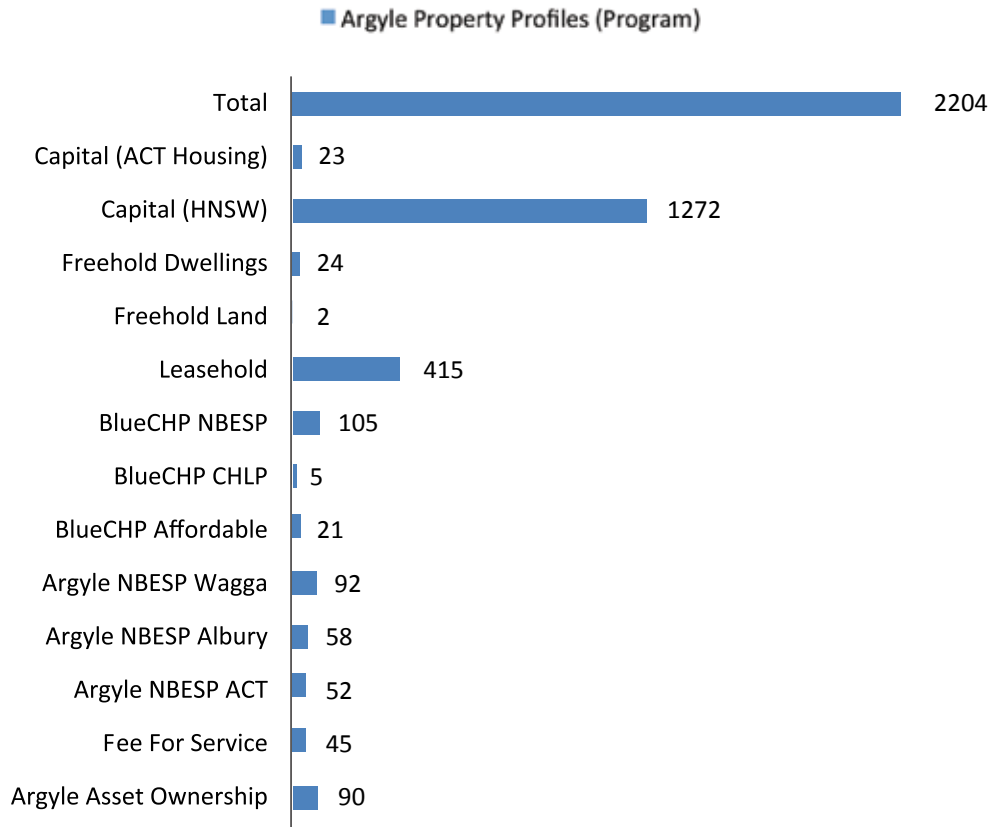
## Our Profile

Argyle Community Housing (Argyle) is a community managed, not-for-profit, housing organisation which exists to provide safe, secure and sustainable housing to low and moderate income earners. We believe that the provision of housing is the cornerstone to a better future. It is the foundation for individuals and communities to realise their potential, and move towards a better tomorrow.

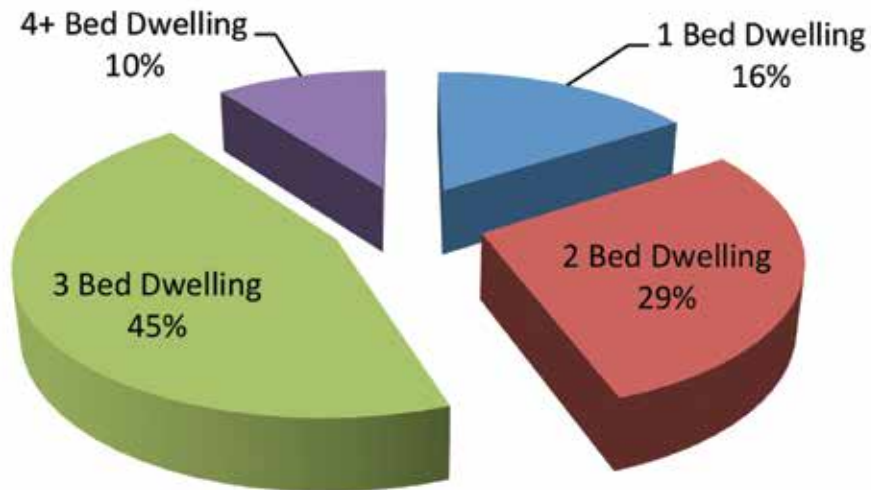
We have twenty five years experience in managing a diverse portfolio of properties and currently manage over 2,200 homes in regional NSW, South West Sydney and the ACT. More importantly, we understand our local communities, we put the interests of our clients first and in partnership with our clients and other agencies, we provide services that build better communities.



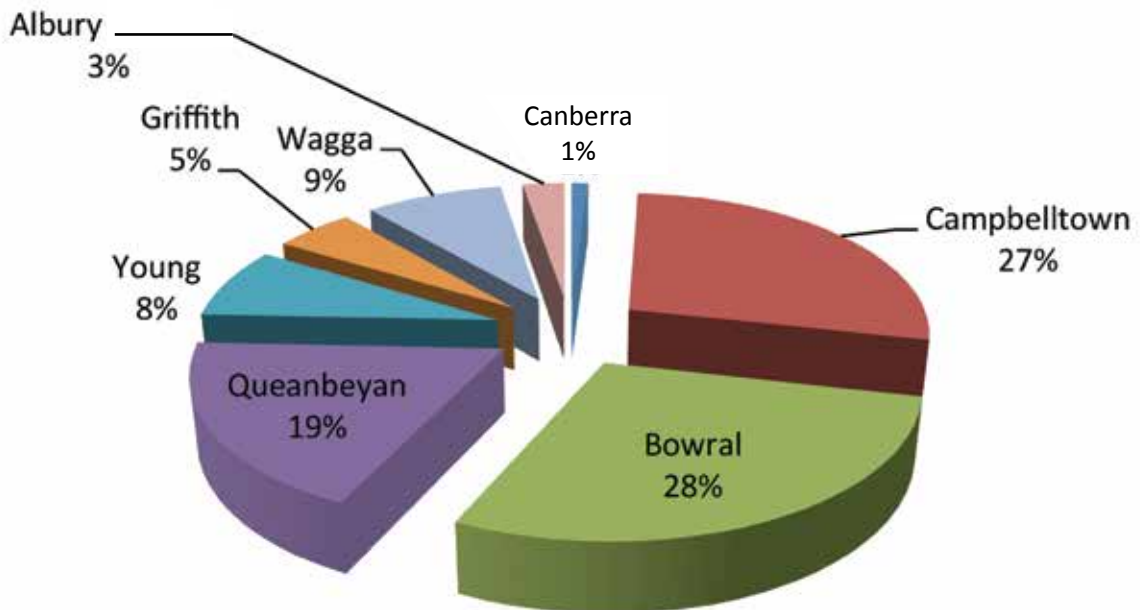
# Argyle Property Profiles (Program)



## Portfolio - Bedroom Category



## % Properties Per Office



# Highlights 2011 - 12

## This financial year we:

### Clients and Community

- Formally acknowledged that the key focus of our organisation is on client outcomes
- Housed 559 new clients, of whom 184 were classified as homeless or at immediate risk of becoming homeless
- Were successful in being awarded the tender by the Housing and Community Services ACT (a division of the Community Services Directorate) for the tenancy management of Ainslie Village
- Introduced our Client Service Charter Service

### People, Performance and Culture

- Worked with our staff through a series of focussed workshops to create our preferred culture
- Introduced a new Vision and Values
- Implemented an internal communication program to ensure our staff are well informed
- Introduced human resource capability into the organisation to lead the learning, development and performance of our people.

### Organisational Capability

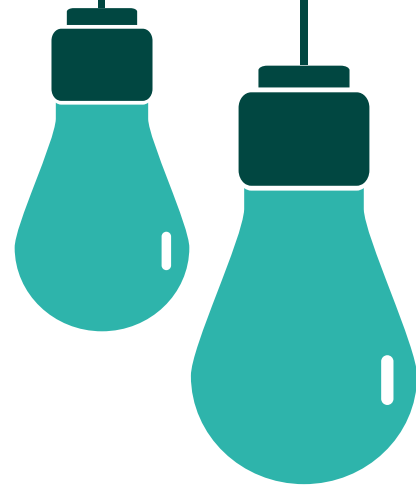
- Achieved Class 1 registration in NSW enabling us to actively pursue development activities and partnerships
- Significantly enhanced our management capabilities with the appointment of the Leadership Team
- Brought additional skills and experience to the Board with the appointment of two new directors
- Implemented CompliSpace to manage our compliance and risk management requirements

### Sustainable Growth

- Achieved an operating surplus before adjustments for changes in investment values of \$2.7 million and net profit after investment valuation adjustments of \$1.7 million
- Increased the number of properties under management from 2015 to 2204 – an increase of 9%
- Exceeded our Asset Vesting Targets with the purchase of an additional sixteen properties
- Opened a seventh office based in the ACT

### Reputation and Identity

- Chris Bratchford appointed as a director to the Board of NSW Federation of Housing Associations
- Refreshed our corporate brand
- Continued to build our media profile with coverage of our priority community projects







Affordable Homes  
Griffith



Homelessness Night  
Griffith Sleepout

# Chairman's Report

Jamie's story (inside cover) is a great reminder that despite a background of disadvantage and homelessness, a secure and affordable home ultimately offers hope. This is both our challenge and our commitment. Our greatest priority remains helping those such as Jamie into their own homes and working alongside our clients to ensure they successfully maintain their tenancies. We are however part of a bigger picture, support services and agencies such as Edil Quin assist people to develop the skills they need to work toward their goals, increase their independence and participate as members of their community.

This year Argyle housed 184 people who were homeless, or were at immediate risk of becoming homeless. We also welcomed 559 new tenants and we continued to provide secure and affordable homes to 4,580 people who would otherwise struggle to find somewhere to live. As a society, we have largely moved away from the notion that those people who experience disadvantage are responsible for their own predicament. Instead, we understand that there are many reasons for poverty and disadvantage. We understand that addressing the underlying causes can make the biggest difference – factors such as education, adequate income support, employment and training, and readily accessible healthcare are critical. However, improvement in these factors is rarely possible in the absence of secure, affordable housing which acts as a fundamental building block.

It is our goal to partner with other human services organisations in community renewal, improvements in education, access to employment schemes and other services that will provide greater opportunities for our clients.

As always 'top of mind' for the Board, the leadership team and Argyle's staff is our social purpose, not just to our current clients, but also to those who may need our services in the future. The achievement of a net surplus of \$2.7 million, a net asset base of \$46.8 million and Class 1 registration is not about our success as a business; it is about having the financial and human resources to continue to support and house those in need. That we are able to meet this year's vesting targets out of cash reserves, without the need for borrowings, demonstrates how our commercial success has been the vehicle for achieving our social purpose.

This year we placed a strong focus on reviewing Board processes and our Board's effectiveness. This involved a critical review of Board and Committee Charters, an externally facilitated Board Effectiveness Review and the implementation of Director development plans. Following the reviews of the Director skills and experience matrix we resolved to recruit two additional skills based directors. As a result of recruitment process we are delighted to welcome two new Directors, Terry Downing and Pamela Edwards, who have already demonstrated their value to the organisation.

Chris Benton  
Chairman

In last year's annual report, I noted that the Board had recognised the compelling argument for Argyle to transform itself into a commercially capable, financially astute and contemporary organisation, if we are to remain relevant. Under Chris Bratchord's leadership and the commitment of his team, this transformation is well underway. As an organisation we will continue to face challenges, both internally and externally. The community housing sector faces some uncertainty around the direction of government policy, the implications of the likely introduction of the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Bill 2012 and the challenges of a shrinking public purse. As a community housing provider we continue to face an aging population, an increasingly complex client base and, in many of the areas in which we operate, significant disadvantage and social exclusion. However, the Board and I remain confident that we have the right platform in place for continued and sustainable growth. I thank the members of the Board for their continued excellent stewardship of our organisation. Good governance underpins everything.

As always a thank you to our clients for their continued support and a warm welcome to those who joined us this year. I also would like to pay tribute to Lesley Oatley, General Manager, Business Support who left us in May 2012. Lesley has been active in the Community Housing Sector for 27 years and was instrumental in bringing positive change to both the sector and Argyle. We wish her the very best in her retirement. Finally, my thanks and that of the Board to Allan Jones who resigned as a Director in October 2011. Allan was instrumental in taking the Board to the next level during his time as a Director and on behalf of the Board, I recognise his substantial contributions.



# Chief Executive Officer's Report

The 2012 financial year was significant for a number of reasons, in particular for the time the Argyle team spent reviewing Argyle's core purpose and organisational values and making important changes to the way we see and do our role.

We recognised that the most important thing that we can do is to help our clients achieve better outcomes in their lives. This means that while we understand that the provision of housing is an essential building block to achieving this, we need to do much more to help many of our clients become engaged with the broader community and achieve a sense of social inclusion. This intent has been reflected in our strategic and operating plans developed for the 2013 to 2015 financial years with these having a far greater focus on individual and community development activities than previously. We have also revised our vision to better capture this intent:

*'By providing housing as the foundation, assist our clients and their communities to achieve a better future.'*

We believe that by refocusing our business in this way we can have a greater impact in helping our clients achieve what they want.

In addition to reassessing our core purpose and values, over the last year we have spent the bulk of our time and effort on enhancing our organisational capability and improving the quality and efficiency of our service delivery. In July 2011 we appointed four new General Managers with functional responsibility for Asset and Development, Client Services, Community Development and Communications, and Finance. This new structure, and the skills brought by the new members of the team, enhanced our ability to build a strong, viable and competitive business that can sustain delivery of housing and offer better social outcomes for our clients.

Furthermore, the development of our management capability and capacity has been complemented by our focus on building robust governance, compliance, risk management and financial disciplines. These initiatives underpinned Argyle being awarded Class 1 Registration in April 2012.

With a new leadership team in place and ambitious plans for the future, FY 12 was an opportune time to strengthen our foundations following a period of rapid growth and transformation.

With the entire Argyle team providing the requisite skills and commitment we made substantial progress against our three year strategic plan:

## Achieve sustainable growth in property and portfolio management

Our portfolio has grown by 36 % over the 2011 and 2012 financial years including 9% growth achieved during this financial year. We diversified our property portfolio with the successful tender of Ainslie Village in the ACT. Our Housing NSW asset vesting targets have also been exceeded this year with the addition of 16 dwellings to our housing stock. We also formed a consortium with other community housing providers, a property developer, a facilities manager and a human services organisation to lodge an expression of interest for the Airds Bradbury Estate Public Private Partnership redevelopment project.

## Creating community regeneration initiatives delivered in partnership with regional local government authorities

We have made substantial inroads in the planned upgrade of the Council owned Rotaract Park in Young. A number of new community partners have come on board as the project gathers momentum. The upgrade, which will provide recreational and sporting facilities, has been positively received by the community and will promote greater social inclusion.

We continue discussions with other local councils, particularly in the whole of area transfers, on a range of other initiatives.

### Implementing an easily scalable, multi-regional and cost effective client service delivery model.

With the challenge of managing multi-regional offices, our client service delivery structure was realigned to ensure services to our communities are delivered locally to a consistent quality. Senior Client Service Officers, selected from existing staff, were appointed to all Regional Offices to better support our Area Managers. We also appointed a Quality and Practice Manager to our client service team to support best practice in service delivery.

### Developing a constructive culture that is focussed on delivering quality outcomes for our clients

At our planning days with both the Board and the staff we focussed on how best to deliver services that are focussed on client outcomes and social inclusion. Our programs and performance will continue to build on this work. We conducted a series of Culture Change Workshops with staff during the year and recommendations from this process have been substantially implemented.

### Ensuring we have motivated, capable and well trained staff in each of the areas of functional delivery

We undertook a comprehensive review of all policies and procedures, implemented a robust recruitment and induction process and introduced an organisational wide learning and development program. We also implemented a comprehensive internal communication strategy that includes:

- Monthly Newsletter
- Quarterly All Staff Meetings
- Annual All Staff Planning Days
- Bi-monthly management meetings

### Implementing an enterprise style IT system that supports integrated tenancy and property management

CompliSpace, a risk and compliance management tool was implemented in October 2012. We commenced a review of our IT systems and infrastructure in order to ensure we establish an efficient client focussed system that can support the business into the future.

### Having a clearly defined and consistently adhered to asset management, capital and risk management practices that ensure Argyle's financial sustainability.

Developed and implemented a comprehensive Strategic Asset Management Plan and a Capital Management Strategy. An independent internal auditor has also been appointed to ensure that we have robust compliance and risk management strategies in place.

At Argyle, our values revolve around collaboration, support, partnerships and opportunity. In particular, it is providing opportunities that are integral to our fundamental purpose; opportunity for clients to achieve a better future; opportunity to provide more secure and affordable housing; opportunity to build communities; and opportunity for our staff to grow and develop. I am confident we have the people, the structure and the values to ensure we offer more opportunities in the year ahead, and to achieve positive outcomes for our clients and communities. It has been a very satisfying year and I thank everyone in Argyle who worked so hard and with so much commitment.

To the Board, I thank you for your ongoing support and valuable guidance.



Chris Bratchford  
Chief Executive Officer

# Introducing our Senior Management Team

## From left to right

Adam Collison  
General Manager, Client Services

Geoff Blackburn  
General Manager, Human Resources and Assurance

Alex Pontello  
General Manager, Asset and Development

## Seated right to left

Angela Da'Adam  
Senior Manager, Finance & Administration

Sheryn Payne  
General Manager, Community Development and Communication



## Our Five Key areas of operation:

- Client Services**  
 Responsible for all aspects of tenancy management, including the processing of applications, lease signing, rent reviews and property inspections. It also includes tenancy participation, quality assurance, regulatory compliance and local stakeholder management
- Community Development and Communication**  
 Manages all internal and external communications, brand and reputation, as well as having responsibility for the strategic direction of community development activities
- Assets and Development**  
 Manages Argyle's substantial property holdings including repairs, maintenance and new property development activities. It also oversees stock transfer upgrades and the management of Argyle's office facilities
- Finance**  
 Responsible for budget development and oversight, financial and management accounting, procurement, fleet management and external reporting
- Human Resource and Assurance**  
 Oversees enterprise level compliance, Registration and Accreditation along with the general Human Resource functions. IT systems and infrastructure are also the responsibility of Human Resources and Assurance

Lesley Oatley, General Manager, Business Support retired from the organisation in March 2012. Lesley was a well-known face in the Social Housing Sector having been involved in the industry for over 27 years. She was instrumental in bringing significant positive change to the sector and to Argyle and her contributions to the development of community housing policies, accreditation standards and major reforms will continue to shape the industry.

# Lesley Oatley



# Our Objectives

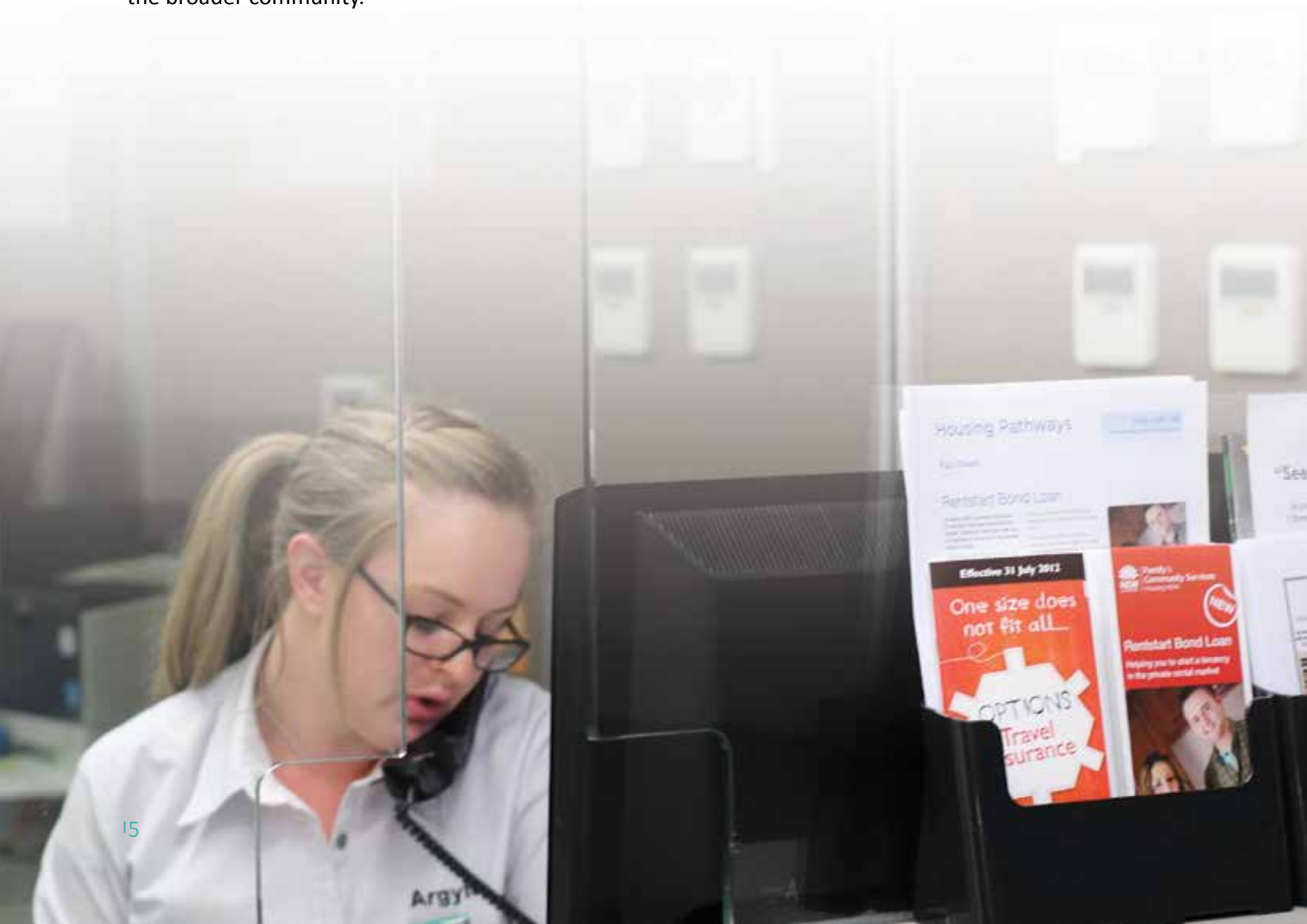
## Client and Community

Improving the social outcomes of our clients and of those who are experiencing housing stress in our areas of operation.

This year Argyle committed to a strategy that places our clients at the forefront of our service delivery by:

- Ensuring equity of access for those who are disadvantaged, indigenous, culturally or linguistically diverse
- Providing the necessary support for sustainable tenancies
- Implementing models for community capacity building through strengths based community development
- Creating opportunities for clients who may be marginalised, socially isolated or significantly disadvantaged to participate in, and engage with, the broader community.

The clear articulation of our commitment to client outcomes will help ensure that our clients are always the primary focus. Given the significant growth we have had to bed down, we have also refocused our energies on ensuring that our operations are positioned to deliver improved outcomes for our clients and their communities. This enables us to grow and develop a specialised and flexible service delivery that is client centred and outcome focussed. It enables us to identify and leverage the skills and assets of our communities. It also creates the parameters for how our decisions are made and our strategies are planned. We have expanded the housing services available to our communities while simultaneously working to improve the depth and breadth of services available to our clients. At the close of the financial year, Argyle properties were home to 4518 Australians, with people housed in 2204 properties across metropolitan and regional NSW and the ACT.





Argyle was also privileged to be awarded the management responsibility for Ainslie Village in the ACT, following a competitive tender process. In April 2012 we welcomed 172 new residents in twenty three shared accommodation properties in the ACT. This also allowed us to open a new office in the ACT.



With our continued growth, Argyle’s services now span twenty three local government areas across NSW and the ACT, and are delivered by a regional network of seven full time offices. We also re-opened an eighth, part time office in Claymore NSW, to provide greater access to our service for people in the Campbelltown area.

This year also saw improvements to our office facilities in Bowral, providing greater comfort and facilities for our clients and guests. Further refurbishment is planned across many of our offices to further enhance the public space and facilities for our clients.

### Introducing Sam:

Sam is an elderly Aboriginal man who has been homeless for over three years. Sam was approved for priority housing and offered a brand new Argyle property. Sam enjoys the support of a number of community agencies who assist him to manage his housing and other challenges, as they arise. This support has meant that Sam has been successful in maintaining his tenancy. Sam is a valued and popular identity in his new community. He assists the less-mobile tenants to carry out their rubbish and they like to spoil him with home cooked goodies. Sam feels safe, secure and really enjoys having his own place.

Total number of tenancies	2257
Total number of people residing in the properties	4518
Number of adults in the properties	3213
Children under 13	1113
Children over 13	192
Single person households	51%
Number of single persons housed in 2012	69%

# Our Objectives

This year Argyle has focussed on a number of initiatives to build the capacity of our clients, and to recognise and draw on their existing skills and talents.

## Harnessing a Tenant Voice

To better understand how well we are delivering our services, we have asked a number of clients to formally and informally provide feedback on the practices of our organisation, helping us to shape them into the future. We'd like to thank those who provided input and actively participated in local Tenant Committees and Risk Review Groups.

We have also appreciated the feedback provided via our complaints and appeals processes, which has given us opportunity to investigate specific areas of concerns for our service users.

We look forward to building on our feedback mechanisms to continually improve when and how we receive feedback regarding our services.

## Empowering people to meet their housing needs

In partnership with Pathways (St Vincent De Paul), our Wingecarribee team has been running the **Rent It Keep It** program. This program is designed to equip people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless with skills to find and maintain tenancies in the private rental market. The program covers areas including:

- Presentation and references
- Finding and applying for a rental property
- Tenants Rights and Responsibilities
- Budgeting

To date over fifty people have attended the program, with over 90% resolving their housing needs, whether as a client of Argyle, or on their own.

As a result of this success, Argyle is expanding this valuable program to make it more accessible to our current and potential clients over the next year.



## Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People and Communities

Argyle was given the opportunity to sponsor three clients to participate in the **My Life My Dreams** program run by the Southern Highlands Community Centre. This innovative program, which is run over a 6 month period, is designed for women who have experienced hardship and are now prepared to improve their personal circumstances. The modules covered in the program include:

- Education and Training
- Health and Well Being
- Relationships
- Financial Understanding,
- Art, Music and Photography.

Of the ten women who graduated from the course:

- Five participants are enrolled in the Work Opportunities for Women course at Moss Vale TAFE
- One participant has a job interview
- Two participants have found volunteering positions in the community
- One participant is pursuing her passion for photography.

We also hosted our first **Koori Housing Day**, which was designed to raise awareness of our services and ensure our community has an understanding of how to access them. This event was a success, with numerous applications being received on the day, as well as raising the profile of our service in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

Argyle created employment and training opportunities for 5 young Aboriginal people in the construction of our Affordable Housing Properties in Griffith.

Argyle were also successful in housing forty five **new Aboriginal households** during the year. This represents 8% of all new tenancies. While we are proud of these achievements, Argyle continues to look to the future, and we will build on and formalise these initiatives under a Reconciliation Action Plan over the coming year.



Promoting inclusion, social and economic participation

## Rotaract Park Upgrade

### For young people and families...

In October 2011, Young Council agreed to support a proposal by Argyle, in partnership with Live Works Live Skills (LWLS), to redevelop Rotaract Park, providing much needed recreational facilities to the local community. A community consultation was held with local residents, the majority being Argyle clients, who fully supported the redevelopment and are keen to be involved. On the advice of residents, minor amendments were made to the Master Plan to include a half-cricket pitch, seating, drinking fountains and rubbish bins.

The proposed redevelopment of the park will, in time, include:

- Terraced seating and an amphitheatre
- Covered outdoor learning area
- Half Basketball Court and cricket pitch
- BBQ facilities
- Children's playground
- Children's sensory garden and screen planting
- Timber bench seats, tables and shade structure
- Pedestrian path.

Argyle has committed funding for the first stage of work and Young Council will undertake the necessary earthworks. The laying of turf and other planting will involve the Young High School, under the supervision of the Riverina TAFE. Two groups of students from Young High School have participated in Horticulture Certificate 2 training in preparation for the work on Rotaract Park. Students from the local High School will continue to be involved in all aspects of the redevelopment, in both planting, and in the creation of art works and sculpture. TAFE will also provide a course in Welding (for steel arbours and sculpture) as part of the Vocational Educational Training Program.



Since its inception, a number of community organisations have become involved with Argyle in the planning:

- The North Young primary school – students will create a 365-day pictorial account of the redevelopment. They are also likely to be involved in creating the gardens
- Day Care Centre 'Annette's place' - will be advising on the children's sensory garden and playground
- Young Rotary Club – has donated \$15,000 towards a barbeque and picnic facilities
- Campbell Page - has "kitted out" the school students studying horticulture with the requisite clothing such as boots and overalls. Campbell Page will also contribute to the purchase of over 400 plants for the park
- Young Council and PCYC – funding has been obtained to run two workshops on Street Art during the School Holidays. Students will then be tasked with creating murals on the two fences bordering the park
- The Men's Shed will be engaged to mentor students on the building of timber benches and tables and laying concrete footings.

The intention of the LWLS working party is for the redevelopment of Rotaract Park to be a 'whole of community' project and other partners will be sought as the upgrade progresses. It is anticipated that the first stage of the park will commence in October 2012.

### For seniors...

Argyle has a number of complexes across NSW and the ACT, which are designated for Seniors Living. Where possible, we seek to provide services which are relevant and tailored to the needs of residents. This has involved seeking funding for the benefit of residents.

One success story comes from September 2011, when our Queanbeyan Team, in collaboration with the tenant committee, applied for a grant through the ACT Seniors Grants and Sponsorship Program 2011 – 2012 and were successful in receiving \$4600 in funding.

The funding was directed towards a number of activities, agreed by the clients, which included Tai Chi classes for Health and Falls Prevention, a Christmas in July Luncheon and facilities for the complex's common room which included slow cookers and rice cookers for community meals and an outdoor Gas Heater for the Community Room Courtyard.

### For everyone...

This year we also continued a strong tradition of providing opportunities to our residents, which allow them to engage with fellow residents and the community as a whole. We undertake these activities with the knowledge that a stronger connection to our communities has a positive impact on the lives of individuals, with positive outcomes in areas of health and well being.

A key event across our organisation was playing host for the **Cancer Council's Biggest Morning Tea**. Each of our offices hosted events to raise funds for cancer research. Our thanks go out to the many organisers and contributors to the great annual event. Social events to promote social inclusion also included Christmas parties, trips to Canberra Zoo, the Berry Show, Canberra's Floriade and a visit to Kiama's Blowhole.



## People in shared accommodation...

Ainslie Village is a unique community in the ACT. It is home to 172 residents in shared accommodation, in twenty three properties. This environment lends itself to the provision of a range of activities for residents. Since commencing management in April 2012, Argyle has continued to build on activities at the Village which have included:

- An internet café that is supported by two residents, opening the café at key times, twice a day. Residents can also access the café, during business hours or via staff when needed.
- The Resident's Workshop reopened its doors last year and continues to be a hive of activity when open. A facilitator from RECLINK Australia attends and assists each Monday and residents access the Workshop via management all other days. The Workshop program has five regular resident coordinators who sign in and out keys, supervise the workshop and report any concerns or inappropriate behaviour.
- Red Cross, Schizophrenia Fellowship NSW and RECLINK Australia provide a cooking class (food cents) each Tuesday to approximately twelve regular residents and others (non-residents) from the precinct. All participants are required to attend on time and do all the preparation, cooking of the day's menu, and the cleaning of the utensils and the room.

- Resident volunteers continue to hold responsibilities in the following areas:
  - Opening and closing site laundries
  - Weekend newspapers deliveries
  - Control of feral cats
  - Managing abandoned shopping trolleys.

The appointment of a Community Development Worker is also planned, which will allow us to continue to build on the range of services and activities available to Ainslie Village residents.

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## Recognising achievement and positive role models

Once again we ran our garden competitions in Claymore, Bowral, Wagga Wagga and Young. This initiative recognises and rewards clients who have cared for their properties and created impressive garden landscapes. Judges of the garden competitions continue to be astounded at the quality and beauty of these gardens. This year four budding young gardeners were recognised – an eleven year old boy for his vegetable patch and three brothers who had created a garden for their mother.

Our annual Rent in advance competition also continued with all clients who were in advance at the time of the draw, entered to win a range of prizes.



“Very happy with my new unit and happy with Argyle all round”

# Our Objectives

## People, Culture & Performance

Ensuring that we have a work environment that supports our staff and fosters an outcomes-focussed culture.

In any organisation the human dimension shapes and informs the nature of service delivery, the quality of the client experience and the culture and reputation of the entity. Argyle is no different. We strive to do what others strive to achieve - to build interactions internally and externally that are engaging, co-operative, affirming and leave a lasting memory that Argyle and its people are great to do business with.

### Our Culture

We continued the journey of re-framing the organisation and defining the culture needed to create a collaborative and co-operative environment for our clients and colleagues. Using an instrument called an Organisational Culture Inventory, we described the current culture and the desired future culture of the organisation. Then, through a series of Culture Change workshops, colleague representatives identified a series of initiatives to drive long-term change to the way we do things. The new set of organisational values in this report is a product of these workshops.

### Developing our Skills

Our objective is to build an organisation where colleagues are engaged in our vision, act in a manner consistent with Argyle's values and deliver a superior service experience for our clients. To this end we continue to make a significant investment in Training and Professional Development for all staff. Learning programs span the range of technical competencies, with training in legislative compliance and reporting, through to the development of soft skills, and creating awareness of, and sensitivity to, members of our communities who have complex and special needs. We are currently liaising with members of our Aboriginal communities to enhance our delivery of Cultural Awareness and Respect training for all client-facing staff.

## Work Health and Safety

New Model Work Health and Safety legislation came into effect on January 1, 2012 and has had a significant impact on the way organisations identify and manage workplace risk. Argyle is covered by this new legislation and has been proactive in ensuring that we are compliant with the new requirements. Argyle takes its responsibility in these matters very seriously and we have taken steps to ensure that workplace safety is a priority.

Consultation is a key aspect of the new legislation and is based on the premise that the people who do the work are in the best position to determine how the work can be done safely. Consequently, all staff members were asked to nominate a representative for their location, who would sit on a Risk Review Team. This team has been active since the beginning of this year and their role is to assess potential risk events, to classify those events in terms of severity and probability and to determine if Argyle has relevant policies and practices in place to manage risk. This group of colleagues have made an important and practical contribution to ensuring that Argyle is a safe environment for clients, colleagues, contractors and visitors.





# Our Objectives

## Organisational Capability

To achieve and maintain sector leading systems and processes that facilitate efficient and effective service delivery across multiple regional areas and jurisdictions.

During FY12, Argyle experienced a period where consolidation, growth and new business activities have often occurred simultaneously. This has, on occasions, created tensions between the need to build our fundamental capability while ensuring that we capitalise on emerging opportunities for growth and future sustainability. Continuing to build on our fundamental capabilities will be a 'whole of organisation' objective in the new financial year.

FY12 has also been a defining year for Argyle in terms of our organisational capability being significantly enhanced with the appointment of the senior management team in July 2011. The diversity of skills, experience and background of our team have brought a renewed energy and focus to the organisation as each contributes to the achievement of our strategic objectives. We have continued to build on this capability with the appointment of a General Manager for Human Resources and Assurance.

Our organisation was also fortunate to attract two highly qualified and experienced directors to the Board. Terry Downing is an experienced non-executive director who brings extensive financial, risk management, corporate governance and commercial experience to the Board. Pamela Edwards has been in the legal profession and investment management business for over twenty five years and is currently a partner in a leading Australian Law firm.

Some other activities to build our organisational capability this year include:

### Managing Compliance

As a Community Housing Provider Argyle has a responsibility to a number of stakeholders including government agencies and accreditation bodies. The legislative environment, and political framework, in which we operate is complex and dynamic. At a minimum, Argyle needs to be able to demonstrate that we are compliant with current legislative obligations. However, we also want to pursue "best practice" in terms of governance, probity, risk management and human resource management. To achieve this Argyle has subscribed to a service called Complispace. This service provides commercially pragmatic and legally compliant policy documentation that is regularly updated, to ensure currency and relevance. It is a tool to ensure that Argyle operates in a manner consistent with the highest possible standards and principles.

All staff have access to this system and we are progressively turning off other sources of policy and procedure to ensure Complispace is the source of the latest version of any Argyle documentation and reference materials.

Our rapid growth has also seen our business activities begin to challenge our IT systems capability and this will be an important focus for the organisation next financial year.



## Managing Assets

The Asset Management and Development Team experienced a full year of implementation of Argyle Community Housing's first Strategic Asset Management Plan.

This year witnessed the commencement of the Maintenance Unit restructure, which will be fully implemented in FY13. This included the role creation and recruitment of a Property Services Manager, who will oversee and manage the new Argyle Maintenance Contact Centre, based at our Campbelltown office. The new maintenance service delivery model will ensure we continue to maintain our priority of client satisfaction, particularly relating to contractor performance. It also allows Argyle's Client Service Officers to dedicate more time to their speciality; working with our clients.

The Strategic Asset Management Plan also identified physical asset activity priorities, in particular a five year Capital Procurement Program, including Asset Vesting Leverage commitments made to the NSW Government, stock transfer upgrades, more detailed categories of repairs and maintenance, as well as accurate forecasting and quarantining of future lifecycle liabilities.

## Client Service Delivery Structure

We continued to honour our commitment to the delivery of local services which are accessible and connected to our local communities. Demonstrating our commitment to these communities, Argyle invested in the local management of our services by appointing two new Area Managers. These Managers will ensure our offices, staff and management are accessible to our clients. Our prompt and effective response to the flood crisis in Griffith and Wagga Wagga by our Riverina team demonstrated the merits of having a locally-based team.



# Our Objectives

## Sustainable Growth

To develop and maintain a sustainable business model that ensures our commercial viability and supports our primary purpose of maintaining sustainable tenancies.

With a strong asset base, prudently managed investments and a diverse revenue stream we continue to be a commercially and socially sustainable organisation.

At 30 June 2012 Argyle was able to increase its net asset position by \$1,714,008 to \$46,837,105. Argyle invested \$2,912,103 from cash reserves in sixteen dwellings during the financial year taking our total property portfolio to 2,204 and increasing our Property holdings to in excess of \$39 million. We also spent \$1,152,911 on property upgrades to improve the quality and functional suitability of our properties for our clients and to reduce future more costly responsive maintenance expenses.

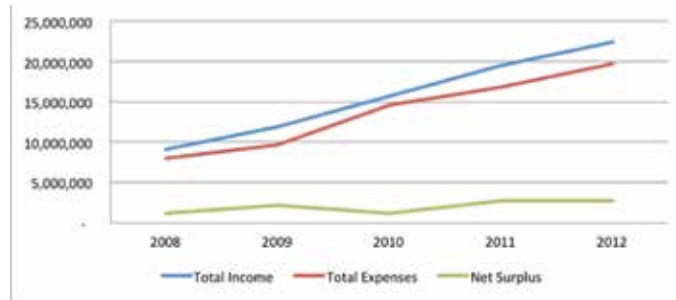
## Highlights

While audited statutory financial statements are contained in the Financial Report, some of the key points to note for the 2012 financial year include:

- Total revenue increased by 14.7% to \$21,997,302 generated by increases in the number of tenancies under management
- The increase in tenancies also contributed in part to a \$2,896,809 (equivalent to 17.2%) increase in operating expenses
- Operating surplus was \$2,665,032 prior to revaluation of investments properties
- Net assets increased to \$46,837,105.

During 2012 Argyle's cash reserves decreased, wholly due to investment in additional dwellings to add to our tenantable property portfolio. At 30 June 2012 Argyle's cash balance was \$7,922,890 including a future planned maintenance reserve of close to \$1.0 million.

## Five Year Financial Trends



## Assets and Development

The Capital Procurement Program was successfully kicked off with the completion of three dwellings, constructed in Griffith, piloting an Aboriginal Youth Skills Program. This program involved the engagement of a TAFE qualified builder to oversee, mentor, and train five aboriginal youths who, in parallel completed a TAFE qualification. As a result, five young men are potentially on their way of having a career in construction as well as Argyle providing three new large homes in Griffith for families in need.

The Nation Building Economic Stimulus Program drew to a close for Argyle, accepting the final fifty seven out of 250 dwellings in Wagga Wagga and Albury. As part of this program, Argyle's asset vesting commitments were exceeded by delivering an additional sixteen dwellings.

Argyle commenced design work on a number of development sites, including two Development Application submissions which will see an additional eighteen units delivered in the Wingecarribee LGA over the next eighteen months.

Stock transfer upgrades of over 450 dwellings continues to be a significant program for the Argyle Asset unit. Expenditure to date has been over \$4.0 million which has resulted in over 60% of these dwellings now of a much higher standard for our clients. In addition to managing the day to day repairs and maintenance expenditure of over \$2.7 million, Argyle project managed over \$1.8 million of upgrades to Crisis Accommodation dwellings on behalf of Housing NSW.

### The numbers...

- Number of dwellings managed increased from 2,015 (June 11) to 2,204 (June 12) an increase of 9%.
- 9,537 Maintenance Work orders issued over the financial year.
- Over \$1.1m spent on stock transfer upgrades predominantly across Wollondilly, Yass, Young, and Crookwell areas.
- Over \$2.7m spent on repairs and maintenance.
- Over \$2.9m spent on Capital Procurement Program.
- Final fifty seven dwellings in Wagga Wagga and Albury handed over from the Nation Building Economic Stimulus Program.



# Our Objectives

## Identity & Reputation

To build strong and collaborative partnerships to support the delivery of quality products and services and better individual and community outcomes.

We recognise that to be successful in our business and to create opportunities for our clients, we must work in collaboration with all members of the broader community. This is not limited to just service providers and support agencies but includes local Councils, the social housing sector, financial institutions, our colleagues and partners and other organisations that support our organisational goals.

The importance of Argyle's relationship with support partners, government and the broader social housing community cannot be underestimated. Without these partnerships, there is limited opportunity to provide services to clients, assist those in housing need, sustain successful tenancies and help communities to flourish. The importance of these partnerships underpin our Value to "collaborate with members of our community to achieve positive outcomes." This year we partnered with over 50 support agencies to provide over 200 support service agreements to our clients. The highest number of support agreements were with mental health agencies (32%) followed by those with a disability.

Argyle's Queanbeyan team is participating in a unique Joint Allocations Pilot project with the local Housing NSW team to ensure best practice in matching people to properties. This pilot is providing more sustainable tenant outcomes.

Our "Break the Cycle" partners, Glenquarie Anglican Church and Housing NSW continue to service the homeless in the Campbelltown area by providing emergency accommodation for those persons who have had difficulty in obtaining and sustaining their housing in the past.

**Ainslie Village** partnered with ACT Health, Red Cross and Schizophrenia NSW to host two mini health checks on-site this year. Both days were well attended and residents were referred by the nurses doing the health checks to appropriate services such as dentists, doctors and podiatrists.

Achieving a positive profile in the media on community housing has at times presented its challenges. This year we were able to attract some positive attention through our community projects. The Aboriginal Youth Skills Program in Griffith was well received by both the local media and local community. The planning for the upgrade of Rotaract Park in Young has also featured in several local Newspaper articles.

We continue to receive substantial value from our membership of the **NSW Federation of Housing Associations (the Federation)**. Our staff attended a number of workshops run by the Federation including media training, tenancy participation and the development of tenant satisfaction surveys. We were also delighted with the successful nomination of our Chief Executive Officer, Chris Bratchford, to the Federations' Board this year.



## Housing NSW - Community Housing Division

The Community Housing Division has continued to provide both opportunity and support to Argyle over the course of the year. We wish to acknowledge the significant contribution they make to our organisation and in turn the clients who reside with us.

**Housing and Community Services ACT** - Argyle are pleased to have continued to build upon our strong relationship with ACT HCSD. The Directorate's support has allowed Argyle to commence management of Ainslie Village with minimal interruption to residents and support agencies. We look forward to continuing our relationship and working collaboratively to assist those experiencing homelessness or housing stress in the ACT well into the future.

## BlueCHP

Argyle continued to have a strong working relationship with BlueCHP and it's member organisations with Argyle managing 164 BlueCHP owned social and affordable housing dwellings

## Powerhousing Australia (Powerhousing)

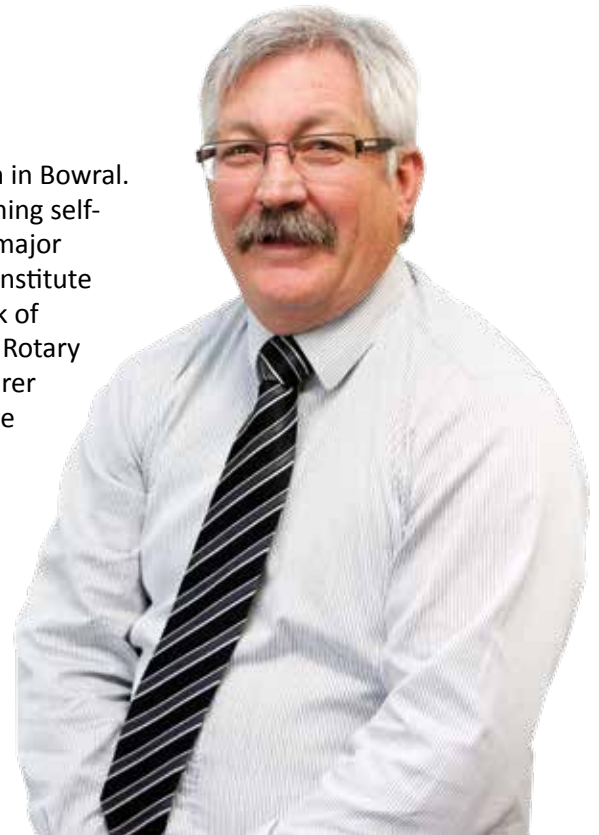
As a member of Powerhousing we have supported their great efforts in raising awareness of the lack of affordable housing through the "Australians for Affordable Housing" Campaign ([www.housingstressed.org.au](http://www.housingstressed.org.au)). It is through the efforts of organisations such as Powerhousing that the need for more affordable housing remains on the Government agenda.



## Our Board

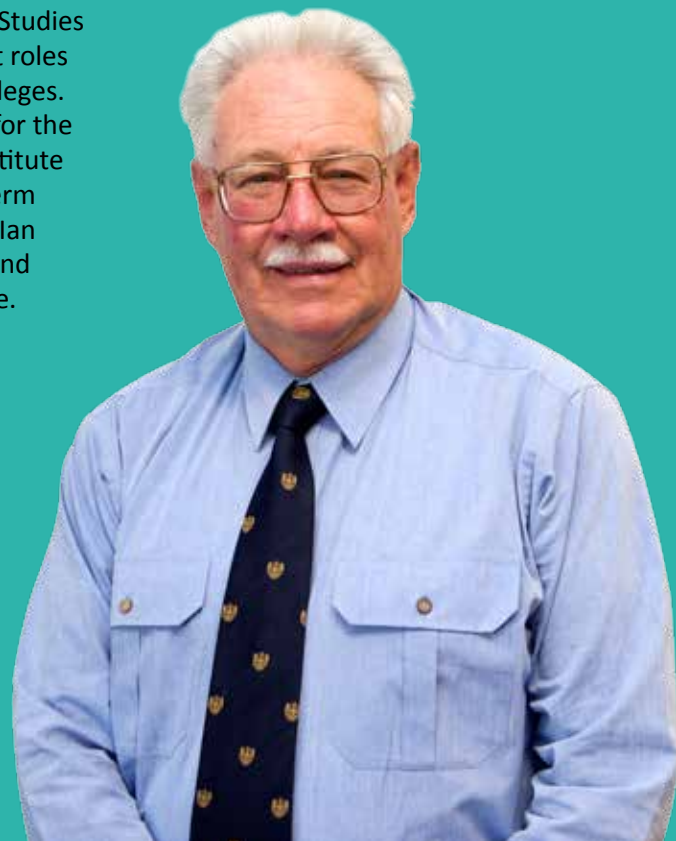
### Chris Benton MAICD, JP Chairman

Chris Benton is the owner manager of the Bank of Queensland Branch in Bowral. Chris has been in banking and finance for over 33 years. Before becoming self-employed in 1995, Chris spent sixteen years working with one of the major banks. Chris is a Justice of the Peace and a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Chris has owned the Bowral Branch of the Bank of Queensland for the past six and half years. He is past president of the Rotary Club Bowral/Mittagong, a volunteer fire fighter and foundation treasurer of the Southern Highlands Renal Appeal. Chris has been Director of the Argyle Community Housing Ltd Board since 2001.



### Ian Cropper BA, DipEd, JP, MAICD Treasurer and Chair of the Audit and Finance Committee

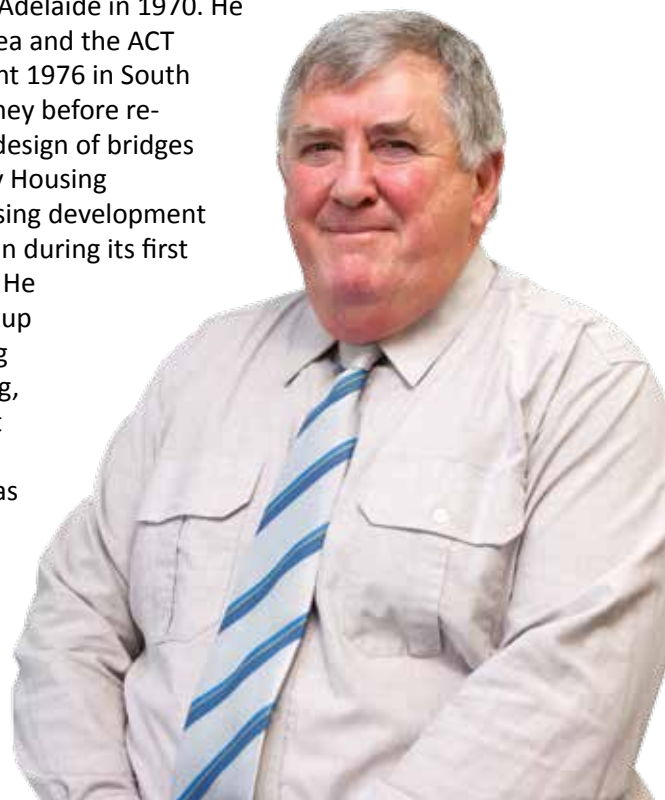
Following thirteen years industrial experience primarily in the area of Human Resources and Industrial Relations, Ian took up teaching Business Studies at TAFE. After nine years of teaching, Ian moved into management roles occupying both Deputy and Principal positions at a number of Colleges. As Principal of Goulburn TAFE College, Ian also had responsibility for the Regional Area and was a member of the Board of the Illawarra Institute of Technology. Since retiring Ian has worked on a series of short term volunteer projects both in South-East Asia and the Pacific Islands. Ian has also been past President of the Rotary Club at both the local and district level, and is a member of the Bowral Tulip Time Committee. Ian has served as a Director with the Argyle Community Housing Ltd for seven years.





**Rod Aistrop** CP Eng, B Tech, FIE Aust, GAICD  
 Director and Chair of the Development Committee

Rod graduated with a Bachelor of Technology from the University of Adelaide in 1970. He worked as a consulting engineer in South Australia, Papua New Guinea and the ACT before establishing his own engineering consultancy in 1984. He spent 1976 in South Africa in road construction. He managed a consulting practice in Sydney before re-establishing Aistrop Engineers in Bowral in 1999 specialising in the design of bridges and commercial and industrial buildings. He is the Argyle Community Housing nominated Director on the Board of BlueCHP Ltd., an affordable housing development company created by five community housing providers, was Chairman during its first eighteen months and chairs its Development and Assets Committee. He is also BlueCHP's nominated Director of BlueServices Pty.Ltd., a start up firm established to provide affordable services to community housing tenants. Rod is also a Director of the Rotary Club of Bowral-Mittagong, Past President of the Rotary Club of Canberra Weston Creek and Past Chairman and currently committee member of Engineers Australia, Southern Highlands and Tablelands Regional Group. Rod has served as a director of Argyle Community Housing since 2004.



**Nicolette McAdoo** MAICD  
 Director and Member of the Human Resources Sub-Committee

For thirty one years Nikki worked as a Makeup Artist in film and television both in Australia and the UK. After moving to the Southern Highlands she decided on a change of direction and having obtained certification in Welfare, became Manager of (HCC) Highlands Community Centres.

HCC offered a range of services to the Southern Highlands local community, including Emergency Relief, Youth Services, Community Development, No Interest Loans and Domestic Violence Court Support. During her 17 years at HCC Nikki lobbied successfully obtaining additional funding for many new services in the area.

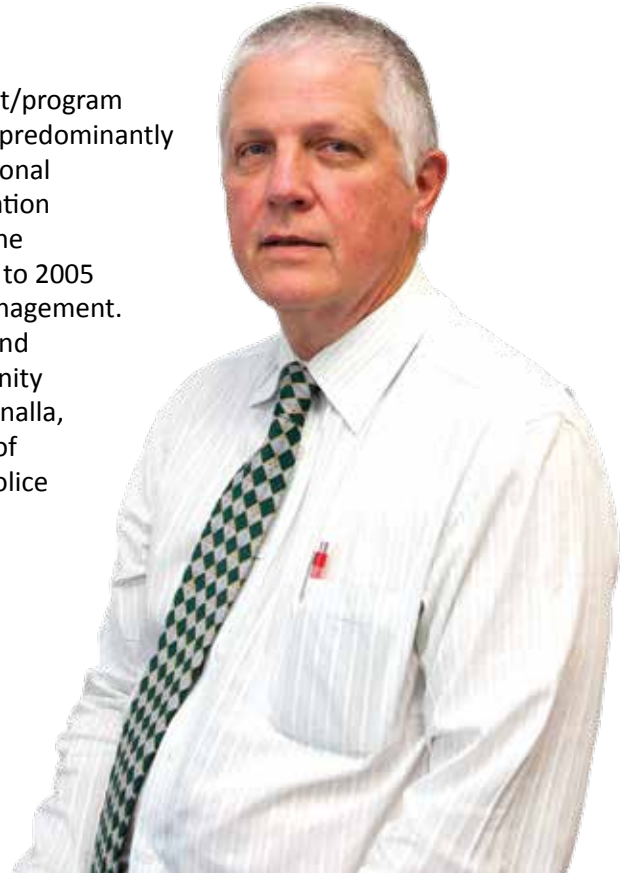
Retiring three years ago, she joined the Committee of the Southern Highlands University Of the Third Age (U3A) as Course Co-ordinator with the challenge of finding a variety of courses for their 900 local members.

Nikki brings to the Board valuable insights into the community, due to her previous experiences in Human Rights Advocacy with HCC on behalf of her many clients. She believes strongly in social justice thus making her a strong advocate for the tenants of Argyle Community Housing. Nikki has served as a director with Argyle Community Housing since 2005.



**Dr Terry Spencer** BSc(Hons), PhD, MAICD  
Director and Member of the Human Resource Committee

Terry has had a long and varied career in science management, project/program management, business analysis and business process re-engineering, predominantly in the public sector. He has also served as an expert consultant to national and international bodies in areas as diverse as technical advice, regulation and process auditing. Terry was the Australian Government Analyst (the Commonwealth's senior laboratory management position) from 2003 to 2005 when he changed career emphasis away from science to business management. He has served the community in both Queanbeyan (his home town) and Benalla (Victoria) through executive involvement in a number of community organisations. This includes two terms as a councillor of the City of Benalla, life membership of Apex and current membership of the Rotary Club of Jerrabomberra. Terry is currently engaged by the Australian Federal Police to assist in the planning and construction of a multimillion dollar new forensic facility located in Canberra. He also has a 'paid hobby' as a part-time teacher of prospective builders at the Canberra Institute of Technology. Terry has been a Director with Argyle Community Housing Ltd since 2007.



**Trevor Fair** B Bus (Accounting/HRM), CPA, MAICD  
Director

Trevor commenced his working career with East West Airlines as an apprentice avionics engineer before undertaking studies in Accounting and Human Resource Management at Charles Sturt University. He also worked for a number of years with the NSW Department of Education and Training as a management accountant with the Catholic Education Office. After completing his CPA, Trevor worked in public practice in Bowral before becoming a partner of Oxley Partners Chartered Accountants in January 2005. Trevor is Secretary of the Rotary Club Bowral-Mittagong, Secretary /Treasurer of the Southern Highland Community Transport and Treasurer of the local Youth Radio Station. Previous voluntary roles included Treasurer of the Rotary District 9710, Treasurer of the Southern Highlands International Piano Competition, Treasurer of Oxley College P&F. Trevor was appointed to the Argyle Community Housing Ltd Board in 2008.

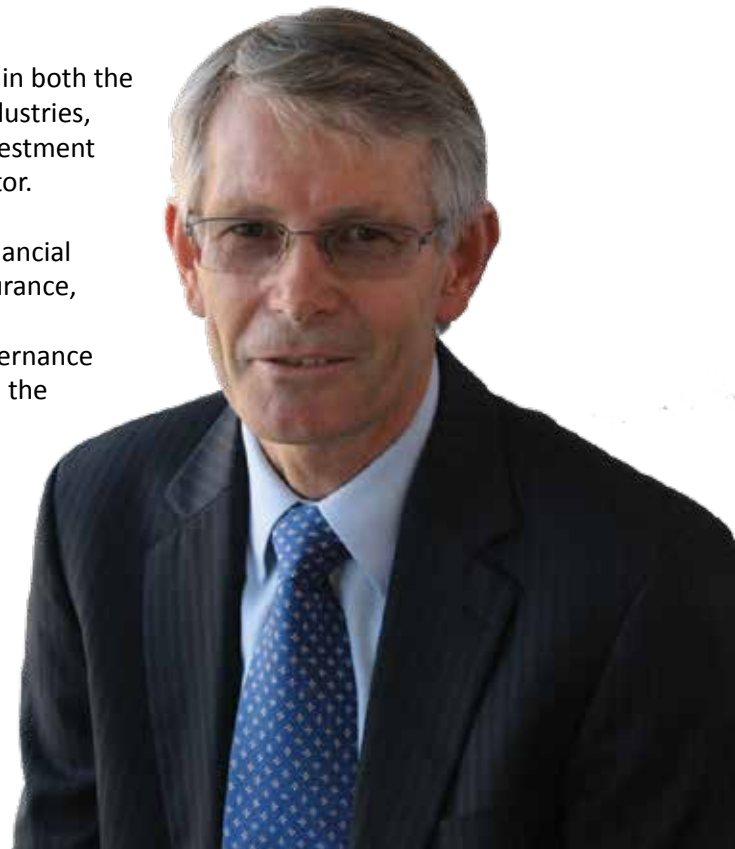


**Terry Downing** B Comm, M Mgmt, CPA, FAICD, FCIS  
ANZIIF Fellow Director

Terry is an experienced non-executive director, holding positions in both the public and private sectors across a range of organisations and industries, including energy utilities, superannuation, general insurance, investment management and the private health insurance prudential regulator.

His prior experience includes senior executive positions in the financial services sector and consulting to service industries including insurance, banking, funds management, superannuation and aged care.

Terry brings extensive financial, risk management, corporate governance and commercial experience to the board. Terry was appointed to the Argyle Community Housing Ltd Board in April 2012.



**Pamela Edwards** BA/LLB (UNSW), MAICD  
Director

Pamela has been in the legal profession and investment management business for over twenty five years and worked in the United Kingdom and Europe for eighteen years in the insurance, investment management and pensions businesses. Prior to that Pamela was a partner in a prominent Australian law firm. She has served the community on the boards of Australian arts organisations and was a founder member/director of a fund-raising committee for the charity now known as Red Kite. Pamela is a former Vice President of the Corporate Counsel Association, Europe and is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Pamela was appointed to the Argyle Community Housing Ltd Board in April 2012.



# Our Performance

Resources	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012
Total number of employees	40	51	61
Client Satisfaction			
Clients satisfied that the property meets their needs	94%	93%	Clients Satisfaction Survey underway
Clients who felt the property was an improvement on previous accommodations	93%	96%	In progress
Clients who found our staff helpful	95%	91%	In progress
% of clients satisfied with the response on repairs & maintenance	92%	87%	In progress
Assets			
Dwellings under management	1609	2015	2204
Cost of property upgrades	\$0.9 mill	\$2.0 mill	\$1.2 mill
Maintenance & Repairs expenditure	\$2.4 mill	\$2.8 mill	\$2.7 mill
People Assisted in Social Housing			
New Tenancies	443	623	559
Internal Transfers	112	123	171
Finance			
Operating Income	\$15.5 mill	\$19.2 mill	\$22.0 mill
Operating Surplus	\$1.2 mill	\$2.7 mill	\$2.7 mill
Net Surplus	\$1.2 mill	\$37.0 mill	\$1.7 mill
Net Assets	\$8.1 mill	\$45.1 mill	\$46.8 mill

# Our Outlook

By examining our strategic objectives, business activities and operating environment we have distilled three areas of focus which we see as pre-conditions for the continued development and growth of Argyle:

**Getting our fundamental capability right** – We recognise that without confidence in our capability to deliver services that are “fit for purpose” in the present day, we risk failing to capitalise on opportunities to better support our clients in the future.

This will be achieved by:

- A continued focus on client service delivery with a program of continual improvement
- Ensuring each person in the organisation has role and goal clarity and is equipped with the relevant core skills
- Having systems and processes that are focussed on core service delivery
- Having a clear understanding of how Argyle is perceived by its clients and the broader community

**Focussing on individual inclusion and community development** – Our social objective requires us to direct our core business activities and energies beyond the provision of suitable housing to helping our clients and communities achieve sustainable and positive outcomes.

This will be achieved by:

- Ensuring individuals have access to the full range of support services and we have in place a framework to identify community engagement and renewal opportunities
- Having a culture that is outcomes focussed
- Building our Asset Based Community Development competencies
- Actively engaging with our clients to leverage their strengths in building stronger communities

**Exploring growth opportunities** – We recognise that as our commercial success is the vehicle by which we fulfil our social purpose, we must employ a targeted growth program that supports a sustainable revenue stream.

This will be achieved by:

- Identifying opportunities for partnerships and alliances that will support our organisational growth
- Having in house project management and business development capability
- Applying decision making metrics in the assessment of new business opportunities that takes into account a portfolio approach
- Demonstrating an evidence based approach for service delivery that supports our claims of high level service delivery

# Argyle Stories

A single dad and teenage son presented at the Argyle Young office desperate for accommodation.

After losing their home and with nowhere to go their only option was to stay at the local pub. The father was concerned that his son was frightened and insecure in this environment which was in turn effecting his education. They were eating fast food and walking six kilometres to their storage unit outside of town everyday for their belongings. They would wait outside in the cold for the laundromat to open so they could wash and wear their clothes. After approving their priority application, the Client Service Team was able to locate a suitable property and house them within a couple of weeks. The father reported that his son was now much more settled and his school work had significantly improved now he had the security of a home.

An elderly client who had lost her husband a few years ago was suffering and it affected every aspect of her life.

She had lost weight and her house keeping and living skills were diminishing. She had taken in cats from the neighbourhood which had subsequently multiplied. Due to the poor living conditions this lady needed to be relocated for the home to be cleaned and fumigated. She was distressed at leaving a house she had shared with her husband for over a decade and where they had shared his last days. There was a real emotional attachment to this property. After several discussions the client agreed to move and she understood that the cats needed to go to the RSPCA in order for them to have better living conditions. This was an emotional time for the client, Client Service Officers and the neighbours.



“Been with Argyle more than 10 years. Very happy. Always good with maintenance and any other issues”

NSW  
REGISTERED  
Community  
Housing Provider

# Contact

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### Campbelltown Office

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### Queanbeyan Office

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131 Monaro Street,  
PO Box 502 Queanbeyan  
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### Wagga Wagga Office

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NSW 2650

### Griffith Office

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PO Box 389 Griffith  
NSW 2680

### Young Office

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